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













The God Ašur.—By Professor MORRIS JASTROW, JR., the
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I.

THERE are a number of problems connected with the form, character and etymology of the name of the chief god of the Assyrian pantheon that still await a satisfactory solution.¹

At the outset of any investigation of the subject, it is necessary to bear in mind that the name Ašur is the designation in cuneiform literature for a country and a city as well as for a god, and since among the various forms in which each of the three appears there is substantial agreement,² no doubt is possible, apart from other evidence, that the name in all three cases is the same. As long ago as 1881, Friedrich Delitzsch³ proposed that the name of the god was derived from that of the city and the country. This was opposed by Schrader,⁴ who maintained the reverse; but it can now be shown, in the light of a complete examination of the material, that Delitzsch was right so far as the *oldest* designation of the god was concerned; whereas the specific designation *ašur* was first applied to the god, and from the god was extended to the city and country or district.

¹ For former discussions see especially, Lotz, *Tiglathpileser*, pp. 74-76; Delitzsch, *Wo Lag das Paradies*, pp. 252-254; Jensen, *Zeits. f. Assyriol.*, I, pp. 1-7; Sayce, *Hibbert Lectures*, p. 124 seq.; *idem.*, *Gifford Lectures on the Religions of Ancient Egypt and Babylonia*, p. 366 seq.; Jensen, *Keilinschriftliche Bibliothek*, VI, 1, p. 410.

² The name of the god, country and city appears either as (a)     (b)    (c)   . In the case of the god, the determinative for deity is frequently omitted; in the case of the country and city the determinative *Ki* is often added. The god and the country also appear as   in the inscriptions of Tiglathpileser I, Adadnirari III, Ašurnasirpal, etc., and as   in the inscriptions of Sennacherib, Esarhad-don and Ašurbanapal.

³ *Wo Lag das Paradies*, p. 254.

⁴ *Keilinschriften und das Alte Testament* (2d ed.), p. 36; Lotz, *Tiglathpileser*, p. 74, also favors Schrader's view.

The name of the city is encountered long before we meet with that of a god Ašur. The existence of the town represented by the modern Kāla't-Šerkaṭ on the Euphrates and for the excavation of which permission has recently been granted to the *Deutsche Orient-Gesellschaft*,¹ can now be traced back to the days of Hammurabi (c. 2250 B. C.), who towards the close of the introduction to his famous Law code² mentions both the later capital of Assyria, *Ni-nu-a(ki)*, and the first capital Ašur, the latter under the form *A-usar(ki)*.³ As in the Assyrian inscriptions, Nineveh is written without the determinative for city, whereas in the case of *A-usar* the word or sign *alu* is added. The addition of *ki*, the determinative for place,⁴ and commonly added to names of countries, shows that already in the 3d millenium B. C. there existed a district or province of Assyria. That the application of A-usar to the district is an extension of a designation first applied to a town needs hardly to be emphasized, but it is of some importance to note that already in the days of Hammurabi it was found necessary to differentiate between the city and the district by adding the word *alu* when the former was intended. The same designation for the district is found in a syllabary,⁵ where in a list of ships we find

MA A-USAR(ki) = elippu aš-šu-ri-tum, i. e. Assyrian ship.

As late as the days of Sargon, in whose days, as has been observed, the scribes seem to have been fond of displaying antiquarian knowledge, this old form of the name of Assyria occurs in the dating of two tablets.⁶ There is also a passage in a hymn to Marduk among the tablets of Ašurbanapal's library in which the first element in the name of Ašurbanapal is writ-

¹ See *Mittheilungen der Deutschen Orient-Gesellschaft*, No. 20 for the first report of Koldewey's operations. On the various forms of the name see Schrader, *Keilinschriften und Geschichtsforschung*, p. 532.

² Scheil, *Textes Élamites-Sémitiques*, II, p. 21, obv. Col. IV, 58-60.

³ Or A-ušar. For this reading of the compound sign see Brünnow, No. 10, 138.

⁴ I. e. therefore the city of the district A-usar.

⁵ II. R. 46, No. 1. 2. c-d. Cf. Pognon, *L'Inscription de Bavian*, p. 31 note 1.

⁶ *šar mat A-usar(ki)*, 11th year of Sargon (III. R. 2, Nos. V. and VI).

ten in this antiquarian fashion.¹ The further proof that in early days this form A-usar was actually used by the Assyrians is furnished by one of the oldest Assyrian inscriptions known to us, that of Samsi-Adad II. (c. 1700 B. C.), who designates himself as the *patesi* of (il) A-usar, and the builder of the temple of (il) A-usar;² and we have another inscription of a Šamši-Adad³ (or Samsi) who is either identical with the other or the son of Išme-Dagan (c. 1800 B. C.) mentioned by Tiglathpileser I,⁴ in which the same spelling A-usar occurs. The writing A-usar by the side of A-šur is thus established for the oldest as well as for the latest period of Assyrian history, though we are probably safe in assuming that after the 14th century the former gave way to the latter and was only occasionally introduced by scribes or rulers fond of archaic devices in the writing of proper names. Coming back for a moment to the title *patesi* of A-usar by which Samsi-Adad designates himself, it is to be noted that while in the old Babylonian inscriptions the title *patesi*, when designating a dependent ruler, is followed by the name of a place, Širpurla, Ur, Larsa, as the case may be, we find, as Radau has pointed out,⁵ rulers designated as the *patesi* of a god, or even of a festival or of men in general. The religious usage is presumably older than the secular one, and it is possible therefore that Samsi-Adad designates himself as the *patesi* of the god A-usar since he expressly adds the determinative for god, precisely as in the last inscription he speaks of the *bīt* (il) A-usar, i. e. the temple of the god A-usar. In view, however, of the recent discovery at Kāla't-Šerkaṭ of bricks containing an inscription of a still older ruler Irišum, who on one of these designates himself⁶ as *patesi* (or *iššak*) A-usar(ki) and his father

¹ IV. R.² 18, No. 2, Rev. 11. Since the correct reading was pointed out as early as 1880 by Delitzsch (Lotz, *Tiglathpileser*, p. 74) it is surprising to find Sayce's queer translation of the passage in his *Hibbert Lectures* (1887), p. 489.

² I. R. 6, No. 1. 2-3 and 5-7.

³ Budge and King, *Annals of the Kings of Assyria*, I, p. 2. Written (il) UT-IM, whereas in the other inscription the first element is written sa-am-si.

⁴ I. R. 15 (Col. VII.) 62-64, according to which this Šamši-Adad (here written Šam-ši-IM) ruled 641 years before Tiglathpileser = c. 1770.

⁵ *Early Babylonian History*, p. 55, note 4.

⁶ *Mitteilungen der Deutsch. Orient-Ges.*, No. 20, p. 28.

Ilu-šu-ma¹ as *patesi* A-šir(ki)—Ašir being a variant for A-šur,² the significance of which will be considered further on—it would seem that in the Assyrian inscriptions at least, the title *patesi* is used only in connection with a place or district. Since, furthermore, in another inscription of Irišum³—and probably also in some of those just found at Kala't-Šerkaṭ—the name of the god is also written A-šir, the identity of A-usar with Ašur as designations both of the place and the god finds further confirmation. Leaving the variant Ašir aside for the moment and confining ourselves to the two terms A-usar and A-šur, the presumption would be in favor of regarding the former term as the older from which in some way the latter was derived. From the age of the inscriptions, however, in which the two forms occur, no conclusion as to relative priority can be drawn, for it is precisely in Hammurabi's days that we encounter the form Ašur as well as A-usar. In a letter of Hammurabi addressed to Sin-iddinam,⁴ the name appears as Aš-šur (*ki*)⁵ written in the usual fashion of later days; and again, in a letter addressed to Hammurabi, we find the name of the country written Aš-šu-ur (*ki*).⁶ These passages remove any doubt that may remain as to the justification of identifying A-usar with Ašur, and we are likewise justified in concluding that the proper name (*il*) A-usar-i-di-nam⁷ occurring twice in commercial documents of the reign of Sin-muballit is equivalent to Ašur-iddin.

But while the evidence so far available does not permit a decision as to the priority of one form over the other, it is of

¹ So Delitzsch, l. c. note, who says that this reading, which therefore replaces the hitherto accepted Hal-lu, is perfectly clear.

² First pointed out by Meissner, *Assyriologische Studien*, I, p. 17.

³ I. R. 6, No. 2, l. 7 *a-na A-šir be-li-šu*, i. e. 'to Ašir his lord'.

⁴ King, *Letters and Inscriptions of Hammurabi*, No. 23, obv. 7 (Vol. I, pl. 37), and Nagel in *Beiträge zur Assyriologie*, IV, p. 454. Cf. Winckler, *Keilinschriften u. d. A. T.*, p. 33.

⁵ The signs *aš-šur* appear here to have been combined already into a single group as in the later Assyrian inscriptions.

⁶ *Cuneiform Texts from Babylonian Tablets, etc.*, VI, pl. 19 (Bu. 91. 5-9. 315), l. 7. Cf. Montgomery, *Briefe aus der Zeit Hammurabi*, p. 16, and Delitzsch, *Beiträge zur Assyriologie*, IV, p. 492.

⁷ *Cuneiform Texts*, VIII, pl. 1 (Bu. 88. 5. 12, 3), l. 22, and pl. 4 (Bu. 88. 5. 12, 14), Rev. 23. I owe the reference to these two passages to the kindness of Dr. H. Ranke. See the latter's *Personennamen in den Urkunden der Hammurabidynastie*, I, p. 16, note 8.

some importance to note that the oldest occurrence of Ašur is in reference to the district, and that the god at this period and down to the days of Samsi-Adad II. *appears* to have been designated as A-usar, though, as a matter of course, the dearth of material between the period of Hammurabi and that of Samsi-Adad demands caution lest we build up our arguments on too slender a foundation. Granting, however, that this distinction was maintained for a period of longer or shorter duration, it does not yet follow that A-usar represents originally the designation of the deity of a place or district. On the contrary, the evidence points to the original application of the term A-usar likewise to a place. It is to be noted that when, as in the inscription of Samsi-Adad II., A-usar is used to designate the god, the determinative for deity is added, whereas if A-usar had originally been used as the name or designation of a deity, we should have expected to find the city A-usar to be written as the city of the god A-usar, that is to say, with the determinative for god retained. Such, however, is not the case, neither in the passage in Hammurabi's code referred to nor in the syllabary¹ explanatory of the signs equivalent to "Assyrian ship." Moreover, it is significant that in Hammurabi's code, the god of A-usar is not designated by name at all, while Ishtar under the old designation RI² is distinctly referred to, in connection with Nineveh. Hammurabi speaks merely of the *lamassu damiḫtim*, i. e. the gracious *lamassu* which he restores to the city A-usar.³

¹ See above, p. 283.

² See Jastrow, *Religion Babyloniens und Assyriens*, p. 135, note 1.

³ The passage in the introduction to Hammurabi's code, obv. Col. IV, 55-62, reads as follows :

mu-te-ir (il) lamassu-šu da-mi-iḫ-tim
a-na (al) A-Usar (ki) mu-še-ib-bi
na-bi-ḫi šar ša i-na Ni-nu-a (ki) i-na
E-miš-miš u-šu-bi-u me-e (il) Ištar

"who restored its gracious *lamassu* to the city of A-usar, spreading splendor, the king who in Nineveh in the temple E-miš-miš has caused the name of Ištar to shine forth."

The phrase *me-e (il) Ri*=Innanna or Ištar (cf. Jastrow, *Religion Babyloniens und Assyriens*, p. 135, note 1) is not altogether clear, but the most probable explanation is still that of Scheil's (*Textes Élamites-Sémitiques* II, p. 21, note 6), to regard *me-e* as a semi-ideographic writing of the plural of *šu-mu* "name" like IV. R, 60* C, obv. 9; compared with ib. B obv. 29.

Is it not reasonable to suppose that if there had existed in the days of Hammurabi a god by the name of A-usar, the king would not have failed to mention such a deity; especially in view of his practice of introducing the specific names of deities in connection with the places in which they were worshipped.¹ It is therefore plausible to regard the *lamassu* as Scheil suggests, as the designation of the patron deity of the city A-usar, and the fact that so general a term is used may be taken as an indication that a specific name for the deity of A-usar did not exist or was at all events not employed. As for this term *lamassu*, while it is true that in the inscriptions of Assyrian kings and also in the religious literature, *lamassu* ordinarily designates one of the colossal bulls placed at the entrances to temples and to divisions of the palaces as the protecting *genius* or demon,² the addition of the suffix *šu* in the Hammurabi passage ("its *lamassu*") as well as the description of the city's *lamassu* as *damiktim* ("gracious" or "protecting") shows that the chief protecting power of the city is intended, and not a merely general protector. A passage that forms an interesting parallel to the one under discussion occurs in an inscription of Nebuchadnezzar,³ where in the course of an enumeration of his chief undertakings, the king says:

ana Uruk šedušu

ana E-anna lamassa ša damiktim utir

"To Uruk its *šedu*, to E-anna its gracious *lamassu* I restored."

E-anna is the temple at Uruk sacred to the chief goddess of the place, Nanâ, and who, indeed, is referred to in the preceding lines where the king speaks of restoring the ancient rites of the goddess. Here, likewise, some specific protecting deity of Uruk is meant by *lamassu* and its synonym *šedu*—probably the male associate of Nanâ who in consequence of the prominence acquired by Nanâ's cult came to occupy the secondary position which in other instances belongs to the female consorts of the

¹ E. g. En-lil (or Bel) in connection with E-kur (obv. Col. I, 53-62), Marduk with E-sagila (ib. II, 7-12), Sin with E-ner-nu-gal in Ur (ib. II, 14-21), Šamaš with E-barra in Sippar and Larsa (ib. II, 22-36), etc., etc.

² See Jastrow, *Religion Babylonians und Assyriens*, p. 281.

³ I. R. 65, Col. I, 54, 55.

male deities. We have other evidence of the application of *lamassu* to a deity, showing that it, as well as *šēdu*, was once used for a protecting power in general¹ and not restricted, as we find in later times, to images erected at the entrances to temples and palaces. A syllabary² describes Papsukal—itsself a designation of various gods—as *ša AN-KAL*, i. e. *ša lamassi*, and the same idea is expressed in such a proper name as *Lamassi-Papsukal*,³ my *lamassu* (i. e. protection) is Papsukal. In incantations⁴ *Marduk* is addressed as *lamassu* and we have the further evidence of syllabary⁵ that *AN-KAL* is a designation of the god *Bel*. *Ašur-naširpal*⁶ describing an image of *Ninib*, which he has made for the *Ninib* temple at *Calah*, defines it as a *lamassu ilūtišu rabīti*, and it is plausible, therefore, that in the *Hammurabi* passage an image of the chief deity of *A-usar* is intended, though the possibility must be admitted that the expression *lamassu utūr* may have acquired the general sense of “restoring the cult.” In any case the *lamassu* stands for the chief deity of *A-usar* and the weight of evidence is thus thrown in favor of the view that *A-usar* was not originally applied to the deity of the place, but to the town or city itself. In other words, *A-usar*, the oldest name of the city and then extended to the district of which *A-usar* was the capital, furnished the name for the god of the place, who when he is first designated as *A-usar*—as e. g. in the inscription *Samsi-Adad*, is so by virtue of being the god of *A-usar*.

The name *A-usar* so far as its meaning can be determined is also more applicable to a place than to a deity. The first element signifies ‘water,’ and the third is a frequent determinative for ‘growing plants,’ so that there is much to be said in favor

Cf. *Code de Hammurabi* (ed. Scheil), Rev. Col. XXIV, 53, where the word is used in the general sense of protection, *ina la-ma-zi-ia aḥḥiša ina šulmim attabalšīnāti*.

¹ III. R. 67, No. 1, Rev. 61.

² See Delitzsch, *Handwörterbuch* 381^b.

³ IV. R². 29, No. 1, Rev. 3-4.

⁴ II. R. 54, No. 1, 8^a.

⁵ Budge and King, *Annals*, I, p. 210 (l. 19 parallel to I. R. 23, Col. II, 133). The reading *lamassu* and the interpretation here proposed remove the difficulties felt by Zimmern, *Babylonische Busspsalmen*, p. 18, note 1. The correct explanation of *An-kal* in IV. R². 50, Col. I. 11, has been furnished by Tallqvist, *Beschwörungsserie Maqlû*, p. 135.

of Delitzsch's supposition¹ that A-usar means "a well-watered district," though the definite proof is wanting, and as long as the meaning of *še-it-tum*, to which, according to a syllabary, *u-sar* corresponds,² has not been ascertained, the question must remain in abeyance.

II.

If it be admitted that the use of A-usar as the name of a god is merely an extension of the original name of a place, the question is suggested whether the patron deity of A-usar was ever known by a specific name at all? In other words, that before becoming generally known as the god of A-usar and then as A-usar, he was designated by some such general description merely as the *lamassu* of the city. Attention has been directed to the fact that in the earliest occurrence of Ašur, viz. in the days of Hammurabi, the term is applied, with the determinative *ki* attached, to a country or district; but here, again, we must beware of drawing a conclusion from this usage as to the original application of the term. It is evident that if in the days of Hammurabi we have two distinct designations like A-usar and Ašur used side by side, we are already far removed from the period when the older of these terms came into use, and the fact that A-usar, though designating a city, has in Hammurabi's inscriptions the determinative for district *ki* attached to it, shows that the extension of the term to the district has already taken place. Despite certain appearances to the contrary, it can be shown, I think, that Ašur was originally applied to the god of the place and then extended to the city and district, by virtue of the identification of A-usar with Ašur,—contrary, therefore, to the process of development in the case of A-usar, which from being originally the name of a city, and afterwards extended with the growth of the city to the district of which the city was the centre, became also the designation of the chief god worshipped in the place as the god of A-usar.

The noun formation *katûl*, to which *ašur* belongs, is used to indicate the possession of some quality.³ Delitzsch, indeed,

¹ *Wo lag das Paradies*, p. 252.

² Brünnow, No. 10, 139.

³ See the examples in Delitzsch, *Assyr. Gram.*, § 65, 8.

who inclines to placing Ašur in the class *katál*,¹ was formerly of the opinion that *ašur* designated the god as the 'holy' one or the one who brings salvation.² Jensen,³ however, has shown that the underlying stem *ašāru* has the force of 'overseeing,' 'guarding' and the like, and Delitzsch⁴ adopted this view. Ašur would therefore be the god who acts as a 'protector' or an 'overseer,' and whether we assume that this function was supposed to be exercised by him over gods, or what appears more likely, over men, it will be admitted that the epithet is an appropriate one for the chief god of a place who became also the head of an entire pantheon. This interpretation would make *ašur* not a specific name, but rather an attribute descriptive of a god's function, and it can hardly be accidental that *ašur* as the 'protector' or 'overseer' is practically synonymous with the designation *lamassu* given him in the passage in Hammurabi's code and which term, as we have seen, had already acquired in Hammurabi's days the general force of a "protecting" power.⁵ The doubt, therefore, is justified whether the god of A-usar, who advances in time to the position of the chief god of the Assyrian pantheon, was ever known by a specific name at all. In other words, it would appear that both in earliest days and in later times, he was designated merely as the protecting power of A-usar, first of the city, and then of the district—as its *lamassu* or its *ašur*.

As strengthening the view here proposed that Ašur arose as an epithet of the chief god of A-usar, it may be pointed out that the name is *very* frequently written without the usual determinative placed before the deity, and while this practice is not uncommon in Babylonian inscriptions of the early period,⁶ it

¹ So in the *Grammar*, § 65, 17, though in the Dictionary (*Handwörterbuch* 148^b) he writes the word *ašur* with no indication that the last syllable is long.

² *Assyr. Handwörterbuch*, p. 148^b.

³ *Keilinschriftl. Bibliothek* VI, 1. p. 409-410; cf. Zimmern, *Keilinschriften u. d. A. T.*, p. 421.

⁴ According to the glossary of the 4th ed. of his *Assyr. Lesestücke*, p. 159, though he also retains the other meaning of "bringing salvation." See also *Mitteilungen der Deutsch. Orient-Ges.*, No. 20, p. 37, where he again designates Ašur as "*heilbringenden*" oder '*heiligen*.'

⁵ See above, p. 236.

⁶ See Meissner's *Altbabylonisches Privatrecht*, p. 92, where examples are given and to which many more could be added.





is the rare exception in the historical and legal literature of Assyria.

Leaving aside for the present the designation A-šir which occurs in the inscription of Irišum¹ as the equivalent of A-šur and is written without the determinative for deity, we find the form A-šur without the determinative in the inscriptions of Tukulti-Ninib I² (c. 1275) and of Ašur-reš-iši (c. 1150 B. C.),³ both in the name of the latter king and of his ancestors and when occurring independently. Passing to the period between the 12th and 7th centuries, for which we have material in abundance, we cannot help being impressed by the fact that Ašur is used in quite a different way from the names of other gods, like Ištar, Šamaš, Adad, Sin, Nebo, which as specific names of gods are invariably written with the determinative for deity, whereas Ašur appears so very often without the determinative that this writing can hardly be regarded as accidental, especially when we find this method of writing to be the rule in certain texts as, e. g., in the inscriptions of Ašurnasirpal.⁴ In the


¹ I. Rawlinson 6, No. 2. See p. 294 *et seq.*

² III. Rawlinson 4, No. 2, obv. 3 and rev. 3.

³ III. Rawlinson 3, No. 6, lines 1, 5, 8.


⁴ Already noticed by Lotz (*Inscripfen Tiglathpilesers I*, p. 75). To assume, as Lotz proposes, that the combination of *aš* and *šur* into a single group carried with it the absorption of the determinative for deity, is entirely unwarranted. Such an absorption is not only contrary to all usage of cuneiform script, but is set aside by the occurrence of the combined group *with* the addition of the determinative frequently in the inscriptions of Sennacherib (e. g., I. Rawlinson, 37, Col. I, 10. 33, 63; II, 78, etc., etc.), of Esarhaddon (I. Rawlinson, 45, Col. I, 47, III, 10. 35, etc., etc.), and also in proper names, e. g. Ašur-uballiṭ, which appears with the determinative in the inscription of Adadnirari I. (IV², Rawlinson, 39, obv. 28), without it in an inscription of Puḫlu (Lenormant, *Choix de Textes Cuneiformes*, p. 169, No. 72), and in the *Synchronous History* (II. Rawlinson, 65, obv. 8 and 10), and again as (*il*) A-šur-uballiṭ in an inscription of Marduknadinahē, the chief scribe of Ašur-uballiṭ, published by Scheil (*Recueil de Travaux*, XIX, p. 46), and republished by Budge and King, *Annals of the Kings of Assyria*, Appendix I (p. 391, Rev. line 14). Besides  we also find occasionally —evidently the first element of  employed as an abbreviation—for the god (e. g. Budge and King, *ib.*, I. p. 158, No. 2, with a variant ; also p. 160, No. 71), as well as for the country (e. g. Budge and King, *ib.*, I, pp. 154, 155, 156, Nos. 1, 2, 3, 4—inscriptions of Adadnirari II. (c. 911-890) and

inscription of Tiglathpileser I. the writing—generally A-šur—with the determinative is the rule, though it appears a number of times without it,¹ but in the inscriptions of Šamši-Adad II² (c. 1080 B. C.), Adadnirari III³ (811–783 B. C.), Sargon⁴ (721–705 B. C.) and Esarhaddon⁵ the writing without the determinative appears to be very common, and this is all the more noticeable, because such a writing of the name is found in the same





Ašurnaširpal—and also as an element in proper names (*ib.*, p. 158, No. 2, and p. 160, No. 71, line 2); also in the inscription of Adadnirari III. (I. Rawlinson, 35, Nos. 3 and 4). The form  for Ašur—always without the determinative for deity—is found for the first time in an inscription of Tiglathpileser I. (III. Rawlinson, 4, No. 6, lines 5, 6, 7), where it is used for the district. This form *aš* without the determinative also constitutes a fatal objection to Lotz's supposition.

¹ I. Rawlinson, 9, Col. I, 52; II, 63; VII, 62; VIII, 2, with the variant (*il*) A-šur; also I. Rawlinson, 6, No. V (three times). In the inscription of Tiglathpileser's successor, Ašurbelkala, the name of the king appears as Ašur-bel-kala without the determinative (I. Rawlinson, 6, No. VI, line 1), while that of his grandfather is written (*il*) A-šur-reš-iši (*ib.*, I. 3).



² III. Rawlinson, 3, No. 9, lines 1, 2, 3.

³ I. Rawlinson, 35, No. 3, lines 2, 14, 16, 19, 27, whereas lines 2 and 10 we also find .

⁴ Lyon, *Keilschrifttexte Sargon's*, No. 1, lines 2 (district) 19 (city), 30 (district) No. 4, 48 (god). The name of the god in No. 1, as well as I. Rawlinson, 36, is usually written (*il*)A-šur. In Lyon, *Keils. Sargon's*, No. 2, we find (*il*)A-šur(*ki*) for the district, (*il*)Ašur for god (lines 3, 90, 94), but also without the determinative (l. 15), and similarly Ašur(*ki*) for the district (lines 20, 95, 98). In No. 3 the god appears again either as Ašur (l. 1) or (*il*)A-šur (lines 4 and 59) of the country Ašur(*ki*) (l. 52). Similar variations are found in the other inscriptions of this king, but in general the name of the god is written (*il*)A-šur and the district Ašur with or without the determinative, as is consistently done, e. g. in the Nimroud inscription (Layard, *Inscriptions, etc.*, pl. 33–34). In Sargon's inscriptions we encounter also for the first time the ideographic writing Bal-ti(*ki*) for the city (e. g. Lyon, No. 1, 5), by the side of (*al*)Ašur (l. 19); also I. R. 36, 5, and other passages cited in Delitzsch's *Wo Lag das Paradies*, p. 254.

⁵ I. R. 48, Nos. 2, 3, 4, 7, 8 (in proper names), I. R. 46, Col. IV, 25; VI, 41 (god) and I. R. 45, Col. I, 2, 3; II, 2; III, 1, 39, etc. (district). In fact in the name of the district, the writing without the determinative is the only form used in Esarhaddon's inscriptions, either  or  (the latter, e. g. I. R. 48, Nos. 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7), whereas for the god we have also two forms with the determinative  (e. g. I. R. 45, Col. I, 47, etc.), or  (e. g. I. R. 48, No. 9; 49, Col. II, 19, etc.).

passages where other gods are mentioned, and all with the determinative. What adds to the significance of this circumstance is that Ašur is the *only* god in these historical inscriptions whose name is thus written without the determinative. Similarly, in proper names containing the element Ašur, the determinative is too frequently omitted to be regarded as a mere question of caprice. Thus, of four methods of writing the element Ašur in the name of Esarhaddon, two are without the determinative.¹ Among other proper names containing the element Ašur, Ašur-uballiṭ,² Ašurbelkala,³ Ašur-riš-iši,⁴ Ašur-dan,⁵ Dur-Ašur,⁶ Mutarriš-Ašur,⁷ Til-A-šur-ri,⁸ etc., etc., are written without the determinative, whereas we do not find this to be the case with the names of other deities, entering as elements in the formation of proper names, and when we come to legal documents, we find the writing without the determinative to be the rule and with the determinative the exception.⁹ Again, the temple of Ašur is written as *bit Ašur* in a long list of Assyrian temples,¹⁰ whereas in the case of *all* the other temples, we find invariably the determinative before the names of the gods to whom the temples were dedicated.¹¹ In this same list, moreover, we find the word *a-šur* used in connection with other gods,¹² and whatever the force of the term may be, it certainly is not to be interpreted here as the specific name of a particular deity, but as an epithet that could be applied to others.

¹  (e. g. I. Rawlinson, 48, Nos. 2, 4, 7, 8) and  (e. g. I. R. 48, Nos. 3, 5, 6).

² Lenormant, *Choix des Textes Cunéiformes*, p. 169, No. 72, l. 3. For examples of this name with determinatives see above, p. 291.

³ I. Rawlinson, 6, No. 6.

⁴ III. Rawlinson, 3, No. 6 (line 1); Nos. 7 and 8. See the restorations in Budge and King, *Annals*, I, pp. 23 and 25.

⁵ III. Rawlinson, 3, No. 6 (line 8) and No. 7 (lines 3 and 5).

⁶ I. Rawlinson, 22, Col. II, 86.

⁷ I. Rawlinson, 30, Col. II, 17.

⁸ I. Rawlinson, 45, Col. II, 23.

⁹ See the Index to Johns' *Assyrian Deeds and Documents* under Ašur.

¹⁰ III. Rawlinson, 66, obv. 8^e.

¹¹ E. g. Sin and Šamaš (*ib.*, 33, b), Sibitti (19, d), Anu (24, b).

¹² *Ib.*, 11 f., applied to Bel; 24e to Ištar.

III.

We are now prepared to take up the question as to the significance of the variant A-šir, which it will be recalled appears three times in an inscription of Irišum.¹ It can hardly be regarded as accidental that the very same epithet is applied to Marduk—the head of the Babylonian pantheon after the union of the Babylonian states under Hammurabi. In a list giving titles of Marduk² he is addressed as *ašir ilāni*, the ‘guardian’ or ‘overseer’ of the gods and in a prayer addressed to Marduk³ he is described as

ušumgal ^u*A-nun-na-ki*

a-ši-ru ^u*I-gi-gi*

mighty one of the Anunnaki
overseer of the Igigi.

Similarly, Nabopolassar⁴ calls Marduk

a-ši-ir *I-gi-gi*

za-a-ni-ik ^u*A-nun-na-ki*

and again Ašurbanapal⁵ addresses Marduk as

a-ši-ir ^u*I-gi-gi* [*u Anunnaki*]⁶

¹ I. R. 6, No. 2. Republished by Winckler, *Zeits. f. Assyriol.*, II, p. 314 (Tafel III, No. 10), and more recently by Budge and King, *Annals of the Kings of Assyria*, I, p. 1. See Meissner's notes on the text (*Assyriologische Studien*, I, p. 17), to whom, as already remarked, the correct reading *A-šir* is due. Twice in this inscription (ll. 3 and 6) it would refer to the district according to the interpretation above proposed (p. 288) and once (l. 7) to the god. In the newly found bricks of Irišum (*Mitteilungen der Deutsch. Orient-Ges.*, No. 20, p. 28 note) the writing also occurs for the district A-šir (ki) in the title of Ilušuma, the father of Irišum, whereas the latter is designated as *patesi* A-usar(ki).

² K. 2107, obv. 3. (See King's *Creation Tablets*, Vol. II, Pl. 61, obv. l. 14, and Delitzsch, *Assyr. Wörterbuch*, p. 204.)

³ King, *Babylonian Magic*, No. 12 (=IV² Rawlinson 57), obv. 32.

⁴ Hilprecht, *Old Babylonian Inscriptions* I, 1, Pl. 32, Col. I, 3-4.

⁵ Craig, *Assyrian and Babylonian Religious Texts* I, Pl. 10, obv. 3.

⁶ So Martin, *Textes Religieux Assyriens et Babyloniens* I, p. 46, also completes the end of the line. In connection with this epithet *aširu* given to Marduk, one is involuntarily reminded of *asaru* or *asari*, which, according to the gloss to II. Rawlinson 55, 68c, is the reading of the sign *siliḡ* (*Assyr. Lesestücke*, 4th ed., No. 25) that designates the god Marduk (cf. the passages quoted by Brünnow No. 924). This name *Asari* appears

as the first of the fifty names bestowed upon Marduk by the gods after his conquest of Tiamat (King's *Creation Tablets* VII, 1; cf. Vol. I, p. 159), and according to the commentary S. 11 + S. 980, Obv. 1 (published by King *ib.* II. pl. 51) is the equivalent of *šāriḫ* "bestower," which accords with the words *šāriḫ mirišti*, "bestower of planting," which follows upon the name *asari* at the beginning of the seventh tablet. This explanation, of course, disposes of any direct relationship between *aširu* and *asaru*, but the assonance suggests that *aširu* was chosen because it served as a reminder of *asaru* and the play upon the latter served as an omen of the functions of 'leadership' assigned to Marduk. A trace of such an artificial association between *asaru* and *aširu* on the part of the Babylonian priests is to be seen in the meaning *šagapuru* "leader," which in a syllabary (S^b 268; Brünnow, No. 920), is given to the sign *silig* and from the god, the sign is also applied to human beings, and with the determinative for man before it is the equivalent of *gišru* "strong" (II. Rawlinson 62, 20 g.). Besides *Asari*, Marduk is also called *Asaru-alim*, and the commentary to the seventh tablet of the creation story (King *ib.* II. p. 51, obv. 14), in furnishing *kabtu* 'honored' as the equivalent of *alim* is again in agreement with line three of the text of the seventh creation tablet. A further compound of *asari*, registered as the third name bestowed upon Marduk, is *Asari-alim-nunna*, where the third element adds the force of 'great,' 'mighty,' or *karubu*, as the fifth line of the seventh tablet adds after *Asari-alim-nunna*. This method of adding certain elements to *Asari* helps to explain the very common ideographic designation of Marduk as *Silig-gal-šar* (see Brünnow, No. 925), and which has occasioned such various attempts at a satisfactory explanation. It is sufficient here to refer to the views of Delitzsch, *Assyr. Lesestücke*, 3d ed., p. 60, note 6; Jensen, *Zeits. für Keilschriftforschung* I. 309; Zimmern, *Busspsalmen*, p. 49; and *Keilinschriften u. d. A. T.*, p. 372, No. 41, and of Lehmann, *Šamaš-šumukin* II, p. 46, note 2, and to add that the Babylonian priests apparently intended to convey by means of this designation the idea of universal and strong leadership (see Jastrow, *Religion Babyloniens und Assyriens*, p. 113)—so that this compound likewise recalls the force inherent in *aširu*. If these considerations commend themselves, it is plausible to assume that the Assyrian priests in transferring *aširu* to their favorite deity, whom they looked upon as their chief overseer and leader, regarded themselves justified in doing so by the assonance between A-usar and *Asari*, which was even more striking than A-usar and *aširu*. At all events, it is hard to resist the conclusion that the existence of a form *asari* as a name for Marduk did not play a part, first, in leading to the choice of *aširu* as an appropriate epithet for Marduk, and, secondly, as a factor in suggesting the transfer of this epithet to the *lamassu* of A-usar. An inscription of Šamaššumukin, who was appointed by his brother Ašurbanapal to rule over Babylonia and who maintained himself from 668 to 648 B. C., bears testimony to the continued use of *Asari* (or *Asaru*) as a designation of Marduk up to a late period. Speaking of his march to Babylon to take control of the country, Šamaššumukin says (V. Rawlinson 62, No. 2, l. 15):

To be sure, the title is not limited to Marduk, for we find Nebo likewise designated as

*a-ši-ir Igigi u Anunnaki*¹

*ultu kirib Bal-til (ki) ana šubat balātu
ittia ḥadiš lû-'ira šar ilâni (il) A-sa-ri*

from Assyria to the seat of life,
joyfully proceeded with me the king of gods, Asari.

The "seat of life" is the city of Babylon, which is frequently written ideographically *Tin* = *balātu* and *Tir* = *šubtu* and the reference is to the carrying back to Babylon of the image of Marduk, which as an inscription of Ašurbanapal informs us (Lehman, *Šamašsumukin*, Pl. xix, 37-44) had been taken to Assyria in the days of a former king. Ašurbanapal confirms Šamašsumukin's statement, and also refers to the fact that in his days Marduk returned amidst rejoicing to Babylon. The inscription of Šamašsumukin referred to (V. Rawlinson 62, No. 2) is preserved in a "double" form, an ideographic or "Sumerian" column with a "Semitic" translation in a parallel column, though it is evident that in this case the "Sumerian" is a translation of the "Semitic" text. In the ideographic column, A-sa-ri appears as the sign *Silig*, but in the very next line, 16, we find the chief god of Babylon once more introduced as *Silig-gal-šar*, the more common form to which in the "Semitic" column Amar-ud, i. e. Marduk, corresponds. The 16th to 18th lines read :

*Bêlum rabû ḫarradu (il) Marduk
ina E-sagila êkal šamê u iršiti
šubatsu elliti ḫabiš lû-irmi*

The great lord, the mighty Marduk
in Esagila, the palace of heaven and earth
graciously took his lofty seat.

In thus using two names for the head of the Babylonian pantheon, A-sa-ri and Marduk, the royal scribe must have been conscious of the assonance between Asari and Ašur and introduced the name Asari with the evident intent of suggesting that Marduk, as Asari, also belonged in a measure to Assyria, or what amounted to the same thing, that Assyria was part of Marduk's domain to the extent, at least, of being included in the scope of the god's mercy and forethought. At all events, as the only instance in an historical inscription of the phonetical writing A-sa-ri to designate Marduk, the use in connection with Marduk's departure from Assyria does not rest upon chance or caprice, but was clearly intended to serve some specific purpose.

¹ In an Assyrian inscription dating from the days of Tiglathpileser III (c. 727 B. C.). See Scheil, *Recueil de Travaux* XVI, 177, line 4; and also in an inscription of Esarhaddon, published by Meissner, *Beiträge zur Assyriol.* III, 228 and 287, obv. 9.

but it is probable that in this case, the epithet has been transferred from Marduk to the second of the great gods of Babylonia, and a further step in this process is represented by designating Nebo simply as

*a-šir E-sagila.*¹

E-sagila being the name of Marduk's temple in Babylon, it is of course Marduk who is the real *ašir* of the place. We also find in one instance a god Ma-da-nu designated² as

a-ši-ir ^u*A-nun-na-ki*

which is not to be rendered as Weissbach proposes as the "gnädigste der Anunnaki,"³ but again as the "chief" or "overseer." The epithet is also extended to the chief goddess Ištar, who is spoken of as⁴

*a-ši-rat muš-ta-lat,*⁵

supervising and deciding,

but even this does not mitigate against the conclusion that it is primarily Marduk to whom the epithet as the "chief" god belongs and that from him it is occasionally given to other "chief" gods. The god Ašur occupies the same position in the north that Marduk does in the south, and he does so by virtue of the central importance acquired by the city A-usar, exactly as Marduk obtains his preëminent position at the head of the Babylonian pantheon because the city of Babylon, of which he was the patron, became the capital of the country. It would be peculiarly appropriate, therefore, for the *lamassu*

¹ King, *Babylonian Magic*, No. 22, obv. 3; *ib.*, No. 6, obv. 43, the correct reading is presumably a-šar ("place"), and not a-šir as King proposes. On the other hand, King may be correct in proposing the reading *ašira* No. 27, 6, and in that case, the epithet would also belong to Nergal.

² Weissbach, *Babylonische Miscellen*, Pl. 14 (Rev.) 50. Madanu, the husband of Bau, is evidently identical with the god usually read Nin-girsu. Ideographically represented (l. 49) as "the great judge," the meaning of Madanu (from the well known stem *dīnu* "judge") is also perfectly clear. Nin-girsu is a solar deity, and Šamaš, the sun-god *par excellence*, is commonly known as the "judge of heaven and earth."

³ *Babylonische Miscellen*, p. 39.

⁴ Craig, *Assyrian and Babylonian Religious Texts* II, pl. 18, l. 28.

⁵ Cf. Iš-tar-šu muš-tal-tum (IV. R². 7, Col. I, 13).

damīktim, the “gracious protecting power” to be designated as the *ašīru*, and the occurrence of this term in an inscription of so early a date as that of Irišum merely proves, confirmatory of other evidence now available, that the age of the political importance of A-usar, and of the district of which it was the centre, is far higher than only a short time ago was supposed; in other words, that the beginning of an Assyrian empire belongs to the third millenium before this era. With the fondness that Babylonians and Assyrians in common with Hebrews and Arabs had for plays upon names, the assonance between *A-usar* and *ašīr* was no doubt an important factor in the choice of this epithet for the *lamassu* of the place, and the fact that *ašīr* as the “overseer” conveyed about the same idea as *lamassu*, by which the god had hitherto been designated, was probably a second factor; but over and above this, the term was selected because the god of A-usar corresponded to Marduk, the *ašīr* of the south, even though we cannot as yet by inscriptions trace the application of the term to Marduk as far back as the occurrence of *ašīr* in Assyrian inscriptions. As to the modification of *a-šīr* to *a-šur*, which took place at some time between the period of Irišum and Adadnirari I. (c. 1345 B. C.), one may perhaps account for it by the desire, equally natural, to differentiate the *a-šīr* of the north from the *a-šīr* of the south, and the term *a-šur* once introduced superseded the other. The change itself from *fa’īl* to *fa’ul* is a comparatively slight one and the Arabic presents many examples of the interchange between the two, as, e. g. حَرْنٌ and حُرْنٌ, عَجَلٌ and عَجَلٌ, etc.¹ In Assyrian we may compare *šakītu*, feminine, from *šakū* (*fa’īl*) by the side of *šakātu*, feminine, from *šakū* (*fa’ul*).² Beyond assonance, there is, of course, no connection between *A-usar* and *ašīr*, and perhaps the desire for greater assonance may have been a factor also in leading to the use of *ašur* for *ašīr*. The force of both forms is the same, or practically the same, and whatever other

¹ See the examples in Wright-De Goeje’s *Arabic Grammar*, I, p. 134, and *Rem. a* (p. 136). Cf. Barth, *Nominalbildungen in den Semitischen Sprachen*, p. 13, § 6, a note. Similarly the forms *fa’īl* and *fa’ul* are synonymous and the former replaces to a large extent the latter. Cf. Barth, *ib.*, p. 43c and p. 46.

² Cf. Delitzsch, *Assyr. Gram.*, § 65, nrr. 7 and 8.

motives contributed to the interchange, it is both interesting and significant to note that while the former in time superseded the latter, *ašir* did not entirely disappear as the designation of the chief god of Assyria. In the so-called Cappadocian tablets¹ which date, presumably, from c. 1100 B. C., we meet A-šir frequently as an element in proper names, and since in a number of cases it forms a variant to A-šur, there can be no doubt of the identity of the two forms, and that they both designate the head of the Assyrian pantheon. Thus, we have A-šir-ma-lik (No. 10, 6) by the side of A-šur-ma-lik² (No. 3, 4; 6, 5, etc.), A-šir-rabi (No. 8, 3), and in the same text the same personage appears as A-šur-rabi (l. 12). Other names compounded with A-šir occurring in these tablets are A-šir-ta-a-a-ar (No. 1, 3), A-mur-A-šir (No. 4, 15), En-nam-A-šir (No. 7, 21), Ma-num-ba-lim-A-šir (No. 16, 4), and probably also—according to Delitzsch³—A-šir-e-mu-ki (No. 9, 4). Delitzsch⁴ very properly expresses astonishment at the somewhat remarkable form, but in view of what has just been pointed out, the mystery is cleared up and these examples show that the form A-šir in Irišum's inscriptions is not an exceptional one. In thus connecting A-šur through the mediation of A-šir with the god in the Babylonian pantheon of whom he forms in a measure the northern counterpart, we have removed from the name that element of uniqueness which has hitherto been a puzzle to scholars. The Babylonian and Assyrian pantheons being in other respects identical, the gods appearing in Assyrian inscriptions being the same as those encountered in the south, and even the chief goddess of Assyria, Ištar, bearing a name that belonged to a Babylonian deity worshipped in one of the old centers of the south, it would certainly be strange to find the name given to the chief god of the Assyrian pantheon to be so entirely original. The explanation here suggested furnishes the link that we have a right to look for between the north and the south, in view of the depend-

¹ See Golenischeff, *Vingt-quatre Tablettes Cappadociennes* (St. Petersburg, 1891), from whose edition these examples are taken. The proper names in these Cappadocian tablets bear in general, according to Dr. Ranke, (private communication) an 'archaic' character.

² Not the same personage, however, as A-šir-ma-lik.

³ *Zur Entzifferung und Erklärung der Kappadokischen Keilschrifttafeln* (Leipzig, 1893), p. 236.

⁴ *Ib.*, p. 267.

ence of the former upon the latter for its culture, its cult, its beliefs and its theology, as well as for its theological nomenclature. At the same time the later differentiation represented by *a-šur* in place of *a-šir* would have been regarded sufficient as a distinguishing designation from Marduk and other deities of the south on whom the epithet *ašir* had been conferred, and was presumably introduced with this purpose in view not long after *a-šir*, originally merely a descriptive epithet, came to be the designation for the chief god of A-usar and thus assumed, as its origin was forgotten, the character of a real name. A trace, however, of the purely descriptive nature of the designation may be seen in the frequent writing of the name without the determinative for deity and to which attention was above directed.¹ In this way the consciousness that Ašur-Ašir was not a specific designation of the deity, but represented an attribute that indicated his position in the pantheon, was preserved, and the bond at the same time maintained which connected the "overseer" and "guardian" with the still earlier designation of *lamassu* (or "protector") of the city and of the district A-usar. While, therefore, the invariable addition in Assyrian inscriptions of the determinative for deity before Šamaš, Nebo, Ištar, Nergal and all the other gods invoked or introduced as elements in the formation of proper names, gave to those designations in the full sense of the word the character of *specific* names, the frequent and at certain periods consistent omission of the determinative before Ašur served to remind the "initiated" at least that A-šur was not a real name but merely a description of the god as the general "overseer" or "protector," precisely as the older designation *lamassu* retained this purely descriptive character. Ašur corresponds, therefore, more to such designations as the "Omnipotent," the "All Wise," the "Supreme one," which we might use in place of the more specific designation of the Deity as "God" or "Jehovah."

This *impersonal* aspect, thus embodied in the designation A-šur, accords with the peculiar position that the god occupies in the Assyrian pantheon. Despite his prominence in the historical inscriptions, the *personal* side of Ašur, so to speak, is not brought forward in the same way as is that of other deities.

¹ See above, p. 291 *et seq.*

The kings do not refer to statues of the god, and temples of Ašur do not appear to have been as numerous as those of Ištar, Sin, Šamaš and Nebo. Tiglathpileser I., although fulsome in his praise of Ašur, does not deposit the most important document of his reign in Ašur's temple, but in one dedicated to Anu and Adad.¹ Adadnirari III. (811-783 B. C.) erects numerous statues to Nebo and addresses him in such terms as almost to convey the impression that he acknowledged the supremacy of this god alone.

O Posterity! Trust in Nebo. Trust in no other god!

is the inscription which he placed on a statue of this god.² Surely, Ašur must have occupied a peculiar position in Assyria to warrant a king who had no intention whatsoever of introducing a rival to Ašur, in using such language of another god. It would seem, indeed, that by the side of Ašur, the Assyrian kings were in the habit of choosing some other deity as their special patron, one selecting Ninib,³ another Nebo,⁴ a third Šamaš,⁵ and the like.⁶ We do not find pictures of Ašur on seal cylinders, as we find representations of Šamaš, Sin, Ištar, Adad and others. Instead of being glorified by temples and statues, he is represented by a standard, surmounted by his symbol—a winged disc—which is carried about with the Assyrian armies. Though the protecting deity, originally, of a single place, his centre of worship, the old city on the Tigris, does not continue to be the capital of Assyria. Šalmaneser I. (c. 1330 B. C.) has no hesitation in transferring the seat of government to Calah, and though subsequently Tiglathpileser I. (c. 1100) endeavors to secure for Ašur its former preëminence, that does not hinder his successors from passing still further to the north, and in the heyday of Assyria's glory it is not to Ašur but to Nineveh to which the emissaries of the nations come with their tribute. We cannot conceive of Babylonian rulers, after once acknowl-

¹ I. Rawlinson, 16, Col. VIII, 39-46.

² I. Rawlinson, 35, No. 2, l. 12.

³ So, e. g., Ašurnasirpal.

⁴ E. g., Adadnirari III.

⁵ E. g., Šalmaneser II.

⁶ See Jastrow, *Religion Babylonians und Assyriens*, pp. 221, 225-226 and 238.

edging the supremacy of Marduk, deliberately removing the capital to some place with which Marduk has nothing to do. Marduk belongs for all time to the city of Babylon; and if such changes in the north do not affect the position of Ašur, it is evidently because, though originally a local deity, it is not exclusively as such that he acquires and maintains his position, but rather as the general patron of Assyrian armies, as a protecting power spreading his beneficent influence over all of Assyria, a kind of patron saint of Assyria under whose guidance the Assyrian armies marched to victory, a power who sums up the spirit and peculiar genius of Assyria, not conceived of like the other gods as a symbol of a natural power—though he may have been so originally,—or thought of as dwelling in a particular location—though once a local deity—but in reality, as Hammurabi calls him, a *lamassu damiktim*—a gracious and protecting force, the *daemon* of Assyria, who presides over the fate of the country and merely because the chief trait of Assyria was military prowess, does Ašur become, primarily, a god of war. In other words, as in the south, the attempt towards a spiritualization of the religious beliefs has its outcome in the establishment of the doctrine of a trinity, consisting of Anu, Bel and Ea, who, dividing among themselves the upper element, the earth and the waters, respectively, preside over the whole universe¹ and stand alone and apart from other gods, so in Assyria the spiritual element, which is to be found in every religion, finds an expression in the conception which dominates Assyrian history of a power who, quite independent of the other gods and on quite a different plane from them, is the protector of Assyria *par excellence*—the *ašir* or *ašur* of the country. Sayce, in his first series of lectures on the Religion of the Babylonians,² recognizes and emphasizes this quite exceptional character of Ašur among the gods of the Assyrian pantheon and which makes him so much more than the mere head of this pantheon. He also calls attention to the fact that Ašur is childless and has no female counterpart, though occasionally Ištar is spoken of in terms which might lead us to suppose that she was regarded as such. This, however, is not

¹ See Jastrow, *Religion Babyloniens und Assyriens*, p. 102.

² *Hibbert Lectures* (1887), p. 126 seq.; see also *Gifford Lectures* (1902), pp. 371–372.

the case, and the frequent association of Ašur and Ištar—especially in the inscriptions of Ašurbanipal—is due to the importance of the latter as the chief goddess of the later capital of Assyria, the city of Nineveh. Sayce sums up his discussion of Ašur as follows:¹ “We can, in fact, trace in him all the lineaments upon which under other conditions there might have been built up as pure a faith as that of the God of Israel.” Whether one is prepared to go to such a length or not, certainly despite the severe and cruel aspects that Ašur as a god of war takes on, he represents a genuine attempt at the spiritualization of conceptions held about divine government. The later designation of this god as Ašir or Ašur, replacing the earlier one of *lamassu*, did not interfere, but on the contrary, assisted this process, since it represented not a name of a god but an epithet transferred from Marduk to the chief protecting power of the northern pantheon, and while in the differentiated form A-šur, the epithet came to be so closely associated with the chief god of A-usar as to take on the trait of a name and eventually was extended to the city and district over which he exercised jurisdiction, setting aside almost entirely the older designation A-usar, yet the consciousness that Ašur was in reality an epithet having the force of “protector” or “overseer” was never entirely lost, as is shown by the frequent omission of the determinative for deity when the term is used. There is thus an aspect to this method of writing the term that came to be regarded as the name of the god, which imparts to it something more than a merely arbitrary practice or a peculiarity of certain Assyrian scribes.


My proposition, then, is that the designation A-šur, transformed from an older form A-šir, represents an epithet originally applied to Marduk and transferred to the chief god of A-usar, because the latter occupied to so large an extent the same position in the north that Marduk did in the south, while the assonance with A-usar, the oldest name of the locality in which the northern deity in question was worshipped, was also a factor in leading to the transfer of the epithet. Whether the chief god of A-usar ever had a specific name previous to this introduction of Ašir-Ašur, is a question to which no definite answer can be given,

¹ *Hibbert Lectures*, p. 129.

though the circumstance that Hammurabi designates him merely as the "gracious protector," would seem to indicate that such was not the case. At all events, as early as the third millenium before this era, the god of A-usar is viewed as a general protecting power of the district of which A-usar was the centre. The same process which led A-usar, originally the name of the city, to be extended to the chief god of the place, so that with the addition of the determinative for deity, this god was written as the god A-usar—in reality the god *of* A-usar—brought about the extension of the deity's epithet Ašur to the city and to the district, so that, instead of A-usar, it became customary to speak of the city and district of Ašur, which was in reality the city and district of the god Ašur.


Delitzsch's view, above referred to, thus turns out to be right so far as A-usar is concerned, which was originally the name of a place, while Schrader and those who follow him are correct in regarding Ašur as a term that was originally applied to a deity.

IV.

There is still one aspect of the problem connected with the god Ašur that may appropriately be discussed here. Besides the phonetic method of writing the name of the god as A-šur or Aš-šur,—the two signs in this form generally combined into a single group,—we find in the inscriptions of Sennacherib, Esarhaddon and Ašurbanapal the form A.¹ In the inscriptions of Ašurbanapal, indeed, this becomes the common form both for the name of the god and, with the addition of the usual determinative *ki*, as the designation of the district. The identity in form between this method of designating the chief god of Assyria, and a god who appears in several of the tablets of the Babylonian creation story,² has been the subject of much discussion among scholars, who were naturally led to assume a direct relationship between the two. While due consideration was given to the difficulties involved in such a relationship,

¹ E. g. Meissner-Rost, *Bauinschriften Sanheribs*, K. 5413^a, line 1. 7; K. 1356, line 1, etc. I. Rawlinson 48, No. 9: 49 Col. II, 19 (Esarhaddon), and in the inscriptions of Ašurbanapal *passim*.

² See the passages in the index to King's *Creation Tablets*, Vol. I, p. 266.

especially by Jensen¹ in his acute remarks on the subject, even the latter inclined to the view that , i. e., An-šar (as the signs are usually read) of the creation story, had something to do with Ašur. Such a view found an apparent support in the form Ἀσσωρός which Damascius, in his summary of Babylonian beliefs (on the basis of Berosus) (?), furnishes for An-šar.² Since this same Damascius gives the form of the deity, associated with An-šar, correctly as Κισσαρή, i. e., Ki-šar, there was a presumption in favor of placing confidence in the reading Assôros, which naturally suggests A-šur especially in the form Aš-šur, though the change from a supposed contraction of An-šar to Aš-šar and then to Aš-šur (Aš-šôr) remained to be accounted for. All, however, that can legitimately be concluded from the form *Assôros* in Damascius is that the latter, and presumably, therefore, also Berosus, believed in the identity of An-šar with the god A-šur; and even if we should go further and assume that the Assyrian priests, in their desire to glorify their own chief, proposed to identify him with the god who played a part in the time-honored creation epic, that would not yet establish the correctness of the view.

As a matter of fact there are no phonetic laws in Assyrian that could satisfactorily account for the transition of An-šar³ to A-šur or even Aš-šur. Apart from this, if we turn to the rôle assigned to An-šar in the creation story, we will find that there is no possibility of connecting this figure with a god like Ašur.

In the first creation tablet, An-šar and Ki-šar are introduced as the second pair of deities that were produced.⁴ Though coming after Lahmu and Lahamu,⁵ they apparently are given the superiority over the latter,⁶ and at all events in the continuation of the story, it is An-šar who appears as directing the movements of the gods and not Lahmu. The association of

¹ *Zeits. f. Assyriologie* I, pp. 3-7.

² See the passage in full in King's *Creation Tablets*, Vol. I, p. xxxiii.

³ A reading šur by the side of šar assumed by Jensen (*Zeits. f. Assyriol.* I, p. 4) as possible does not exist. Delitzsch has abandoned the view expressed in the 2d ed. of his *Lesestücke*, p. 31 [cf. Bezold, *Zeits. f. Keilschrift.* II, p. 66], and the signs referred to by Haupt in his *Sumerische Familiengesetze*, p. 63, are to be read *ip-di*.

⁴ *Tablet* I, 12.

⁵ *Ib.*, l. 10.

⁶ According to King's very plausible restoration of l. 12; see King's *Creation Tablets*, Vol. I, p. 4, note 6.

Ki-šar with An-šar leaves no doubt as to the interpretation to be put upon both names. The element common to both—šar—is commonly the equivalent of *kiššatu*, i. e., ‘totality,’ ‘universe’ and the like, while An = *šamû* ‘heaven’ and Ki = *irgitu* ‘earth.’ An-šar, accordingly, represents a personification or a combination of the forces of heaven, while Ki-šar, viewed as the “female” complement, is an embodiment of the forces of earth. Surely, no more is required than this statement of the interpretation of the names, to show that we are dealing here with a theological doctrine and not with a popular belief, though the doctrine may rest upon some very primitive and crude popular attempt to form a theory of the beginning of things. Back of the triad Anu, Bel and Ea, representing a mere advanced theory of the universe which recognized a threefold division,¹ and which in turn gave way to a more “practical” triad, Sin, Šamaš and Adad, or Sin, Šamaš and Ištar, we have a twofold division of the universe represented by An-šar and Ki-šar, from which pair the triad Anu, Bel and Ea, the first representing the upper or ‘heavenly’ ocean, the third the ‘terrestrial’ ocean, separated by Bel,² are evolved. In the present form of the Babylonian creation story, itself the outcome of an elaborate and completed theological process of speculation and composition, we have two distinct conflicts³ which had to be waged before order, as represented by the gods of the later Babylonian pantheon, could be established in the Universe: (1) the conflict organized by Apsu and his messenger, Mummu, against the gods, and in which the help of the monster Tiamat is invoked by Apsu; (2) the conflict between Tiamat and the gods. In the former, resulting in the overthrow of Apsu and Mummu, Ea is represented as the conqueror; in the latter, ending with the discomfiture of Tiamat, Marduk is the victor, though it has been shown that in an earlier version it was Bel (En-lil) and not Marduk who played the rôle of conqueror.⁴

¹ See Radau's interpretation of the significance of this division (*Creation Story of Genesis I*, pp. 51-53), with which, in the main, I agree.

² Radau *ib.*, p. 53. ³ See King's *Creation Tablets*, Vol. I, xxxvii *seq.*

⁴ See Jastrow's *Religion of Babylonia and Assyria*, pp. 439-441, and for the modified and revised form of the writer's interpretation of the Babylonian creation story, with translations and a full analysis of the texts in question, consult the forthcoming part in the German edition of his work.

The combination of the two conflicts as well as the later substitution of Marduk for Bel indicate the composite character of the present tale. The two conflicts are merely two versions—and the process of construction is the same to which we have become accustomed by the critical analysis of the myths, legends and traditions of the book of Genesis, and which in most cases represent likewise the combination of two versions. Apsu and Mummu, on the one hand, and Tiamat, on the other, are “doublets.” Apsu and Tiamat are symbols or representatives of chaos, while Mummu is again a “doublet” of Apsu—resting, perhaps, on a third version—but for whom, in the construction of the two versions, no other place could be found than that of a superfluous “go-between” between Apsu and Tiamat—a counterpart to Gaga, who acts in a similar capacity of messenger to the gods.¹ In the narrative of both conflicts, however, it is An-šar who presides over the assembly of the gods, the representatives of order and light, and who directs their movement against the forces of chaos and darkness led by Apsu and Tiamat, while Lahmu and Lahamu, the oldest pair of all, are ranged in the second conflict on the side of Tiamat. Ki-šar plays no part in either of the conflicts, and being only mentioned once in the line in which the birth of An-šar and Ki-šar is announced, is clearly an artificial figure introduced under the general influence of the theory which assigned to every god a female counterpart or companion. An-šar and Ki-šar are thus two figures, like Nut (heaven) and Keb (earth) who in the “Heliopolitan” form of Egyptian cosmogony, are represented as lying in close embrace in the primeval waters until separated by Shu, who lifts Nut—in Egyptian theology² the female element—up from Keb. We may thus distinguish two phases in the theological conceptions evolved with regard to An-šar, the one representing him as the chief of the forces of the upper world, where according to the current view developed in connection with astrological science the gods dwell, the other making him with Ki-šar cover the entire scope of the universe. The former phase brings An-šar

¹ Tablet III, 2 and 3, where Gaga is called *sukallu*, i. e. messenger, precisely as Mummu is in the first tablet, lines 30 and 31.

² See Lange in Chantepie de la Saussaye's *Lehrbuch der Religionsgeschichte* (2d ed.), I, 146.

into a certain relationship to Anu, who, as the first member of the triad, is pictured as in general control of the heavens, but it is clear that An-šar belongs to an earlier stage before the development of the triad doctrine and at a period when Anu was regarded as constituting the entire cosmic principle. Such a doctrine underlies the interesting list II. Rawlinson, 54, No. 3, obv., and also in a measure the list III. R., 69, No. 1, obv., according to which a pre-cosmic Anu produces the general forces of heaven and earth, or, as Jensen¹ aptly expresses it, "das Himmelsprincip und das Erdprincip." Either emanating from Anu or regarded as emanations of the "heavenly" principle (An=Anu) in combination with the "earthly" principle (Ki=iršutum), ten pairs of gods are registered, among them as the third pair An-šar and Ki-šar. This enumeration is to be taken again as a proof of the existence of various theological doctrines in Babylonia which, though agreeing in the main principles, vary in nomenclature and in questions of detail.² In the first tablet of the Creation story, An-šar and Ki-šar occupy the place accorded in the two lists to *An* and to *Ki* or *Antum*, the feminine of *Anu*, which appears to have been regarded as equivalent to *Ki*,³ while in the subsequent tablets An-šar giving directions to Anu, Ea and Bel-Marduk represents the "pre-cosmic" *Anu* standing in the lists before *An+Ki* (or *An+Antum*).

It is evident that such theories and speculations with regard to Anu and An-šar belong to a different order of thought from the views held in regard to gods who constitute what one may call the active pantheon, and there is clearly no warrant in associating either the An-šar in the lists referred to or the two

¹ *Kosmologie der Babylonier*, p. 274; see also the discussion, *ib.*, p. 192 seq. and Radau, *Bel, the Christ of Ancient Times* (Monist XIV. 81-87).

² In this list, e. g., *Lahmu* and *Lahamu* constitute the seventh pair, whereas in the Creation story they precede An-šar and Ki-šar.

³ III. Rawlinson, 69, No. 1, obv., lines 2 and 3. (Cf. II. Rawlinson, 54, No. 3, obv., lines 2-3).

An-tum=*Ki-tim*=*iršutum* ("earth")
An-Ki=*Anu u* [*Antum*.]

Space forbids me from discussing Radau's views of An-šar and Ki-šar as set forth in his article 'Bel, The Christ of Ancient Times' (Monist XIV, pp. 79 seq.) but they appear to me entirely untenable.

phases of An-šar in the Creation story with a god like A-šur, who appears in the historical inscriptions and in the hymns, purely, as the chief god of the Assyrian pantheon, whose associates are gods like Šamaš, Adad, Ištar, Nebo, Nusku, who play no part in the cosmological doctrines under discussion. In the historical inscriptions An-šar and Ki-šar do not appear at all, while in religious texts we encounter them only in such invocations as are found in the incantation text II. Rawlinson, 18, 60 a-b,¹

niš An-šar (il) Ki-šar,

as a phrase to indicate the combined appeal to all the spirits or forces of heaven and earth. The phrase itself may, indeed, be regarded as betraying the influence of the speculations regarding An-šar and Ki-šar, without, however, involving a strict application. For, since we find in these same texts the phrase,²

ZI An(na) and ZI Ki(a)

as an appeal to the powers of heaven and earth, the addition of šar appears to have been introduced merely to give the added force of the totality of those powers—without, therefore, embodying the ideas associated with An-šar and Ki-šar in the Creation narrative. What applies to An-šar and Ki-šar also holds good for Lahmu and Lahamu of the Creation tablets as well as for the other pairs mentioned in the lists above referred to, with the exception of Ib and Nin-ib, who, indeed, belong to the active pantheon. Lahmu occurs also in a long list³ of over one hundred gods invoked in an incantation text, but the purpose of these lists being to enumerate as many powers as possible so as to form a formidable phalanx against the attacks of the demons, such an occurrence does not argue in favor of any real rôle played by the gods so introduced. Moreover, it is a feature of the incantation texts to preserve, as do the proper names, the names of gods that have otherwise no place in the popular mind.⁴ Again, in an incantation ritual, Alala and Belili, who

¹ Republished by Haupt, *Akkad. und Sumer. Keilschrifttexte*, No. 11.

² II. Rawlinson, 17, obv. 7, to be repeated at the end of each section.

³ Šurpu-Series (ed. Zimmern), VIII, 19.

⁴ See Jastrow, *Religion Babył. und Assyrl.*, pp. 161, 166 and 322.

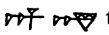
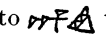
likewise occur¹ in the lists as the eighth pair by the side of Lahmu and Lahamu, and Belili as well as Alala play a part in certain old myths and legends,² but they do not enter into either the Babylonian or Assyrian pantheon in the proper sense.

Lastly, the circumstance that the writing An-šar for the god Ašur is not encountered until so late a period as the days of Sennacherib (705-681 B. C.), enforces the other fatal objections against any real connection between the chief god of the Assyrian pantheon and the An-šar of the creation story. That the scribes of Sennacherib, in hitting upon this new form of writing the name of their favorite deity, were influenced by a desire to connect Ašur with An-šar and thus to score a triumph over the Marduk priests, who modified the old tale by assigning to their favorite the rôle belonging to Bel, may, indeed, be admitted as probable, or at all events as possible. The form *Assóros* preserved by Damascius speaks, as already intimated, in favor of such an identification having been made at one time, and the device, it must be admitted, was an ingenious one on the part of the Assyrian theologians, for since it is An-šar who dispatches Marduk on his mission against Tiamat, the superiority of Ašur over Marduk would thus be implied, and we may well suppose that the "discovery" that the old An-šar, who directs *all* the gods, was none other than Ašur, acquired great popularity in Assyria. The philological difficulties involved would not have inconvenienced the grammarians of Sennacherib's court, and if, by a play on words, A-usar could be connected with A-šir and A-šur, no objection could be raised against connecting An-šar with A-šur. If any further proof was desired the learned priest could point to the form Aš-šur,³ which was so commonly used

¹ See Jensen, *Kosmologie*, p. 274. The use of Lahmu by Nabonidus (V. Rawlinson, 64, Col. II, 16-17) as the designation of images of monsters merely shows that the name survived, but not that a deity of that name was worshipped.

² Jastrow, *Religion of Babylonia and Assyria*; p. 589.

³ The origin of this form, which we have seen may be traced back to the days of Pudu in the 14th century, is indeed not altogether clear. It may have originated in an attempt to differentiate in writing the names of the district (and city) from that of the god, so that the views formerly held by scholars—and still maintained by Jensen in 1886 (*Zeits. f. Assyr.* I, p. 3)—may thus turn out to rest upon a basis, albeit a false one, supplied by the Assyrian scribes. At all events, however the form is to be explained, it is certain that Aš-šur is merely a variant writing of A-šur, just as Aš for the district and the god is in turn an abbreviation of Aš-šur.

for the god by the side of A-šur, and as for the interchange between *šur* and *šar*, that would be set aside by the proximity in the graphic forms for *šur* and *šar*. The two characters were almost identical except that in one case the wedges appeared with the addition of a small horizontal wedge vertical, and in the other were slanted. The chain of argument would thus be complete and the scribe who read his paper on An-šar-Ašur before the Oriental Society of ancient Assyria enjoyed the satisfaction, no doubt, of having convinced his auditors. But conscious of our own imperfections, let us not be too severe on our predecessors, and, after all, we may be doing the latter an injustice in assuming that by the writing An-šar for their god they wished to connect A-šur with the time-honored figure of An-sar. Perhaps they only wished to indicate by changing  to  that the chief god of the Assyrian pantheon was the god of "totality" (*kiššatu*), without direct reference to the figure of An-sar. The sign *šar* has also and very frequently the force of *tābu*¹ "good," so that An-sar might designate A-šur, merely, as the "good" god.² Let us give the Assyrian theologians, therefore, the benefit of the doubt, and at all events, recognize that there is no connection whatever, except a remote assonance, between either of the two phases above pointed out of An-šar, who is essentially a creation of learned speculation about the beginning of things in Babylonia, and A-šir-A-šur, who retains throughout the various periods of Assyrian history the character of the *lamassu damiḫtim* of A-usar, "the gracious protector" of Assyria, and especially of her kings and armies, —the character given to him in the earliest specific mention of the deity in the code of Hammurabi and which is also implied in the form A-šir, to which A-šur itself is to be traced back.

¹ Brünnow, No. 8239; *šar* is also the equivalent of *gitmalu* "perfect" (Brünnow, No. 8216), so that An-šar might designate A-šur as the "perfect one," but this meaning is much less common than *tābu* and need hardly be taken into consideration.

² The probable existence of a distinctively 'Assyrian' version of the creation story, in which the rôle of conqueror of Tiamat is assigned to Anšar (*Cuneiform Texts*, Part xiii., pl. 25-26), may also be taken as an indication that the identification of Anšar with Ašur was made, or at least attempted, by the theologians of Nineveh. See Zimmermann, *Keil-inschriften und das A. T.*, p. 496, and King's seven *Creation Tablets*, I, pp. 197-200.